

# Catholic Theatre Conference

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## CROSS COUNTRY CIRCUIT

### High Schools

Three of our Portland, Oregon members have let us in on their plans for the new year. *St. Mary's Academy* will do MR. PIM PASSES BY under the direction of Sister Terence Maureen. For their January production, Sister Mary Edward, O.P., tells us that *Immaculata Academy* has chosen LITTLE WOMEN, while *Central Catholic High* will offer Doherty's THE KING'S SERVANT in March - Father Juliano directing.

On December 12 the dramatic class of *St. Joseph Academy*, Sprague, Washington gave the three-act GRANDPA HANGS THE HOLLY arena style under the direction of Sister Mary Loyola. Sister recommends this Eldridge play as one which has "humor that is well balanced with beauty and pathos."

The Dramatic Art Guild of *St. Clara Academy*, Sinsinawa, Wis., presented their annual Christmas production, THE PROMISED ONE, a pageant interwoven with choral speaking and musical selections done by the choral society. Sister Mary Angele, O.P. directed.

*Loyola Academy*, Chicago, chose the delightful WHY THE CHIMES RANG as their Christmas offering. Walter Bamberger directs the boys in their productions.

Laurence Hauseman's BETHLEHEM was the choice of drama students at *Academy of the Holy Angels*, Minneapolis, Sister Mary Charitas, head of Drama Dept.

From Wisconsin we received word that *Central Catholic High School*, Green Bay, was the donor of 2 lively performances of a two act comedy, THE BLUFFERS, Dec. 7 & 8. The Sock and Buskin Club of *McDonnell Memorial High*, Chippewa Falls, plan January 15th and 18th productions of SONG AT THE SCAFFOLD.

(Continued on Page 2)

## BOOK SECTION

For those of you who are taken with British theatre fare, you may be interested to know of a relatively new series of play collections. Published under the title of PLAYS OF THE YEAR by Paul Elek, London, each volume contains six complete plays produced in Britain during the year. Since the series was begun in 1949, we now have five volumes to examine and find them well worth the observation of interested readers. J. C. Trewin, drama critic for Britain's THE SKETCH & THE OBSERVER, has chosen the plays, not with the intention of judging which are the best plays of the given period but rather those "which share qualities for which a true Theatregoer looks". Published by Paul Elek Ltd., 28 Hatton Garden, London, E.C.1.

If, however, you seek not complete plays but rather a cursory, overall picture of British Drama throughout the year, we would suggest the new THEATRE WORLD ANNUAL, Rockliff, Salisbury Square, London. This pictorial review carries records of plays and players as well as data on the various playwrights. A third volume will reach the public next summer.

The American counterpart of the above is Daniel Blum's annual THEATRE WORLD with which you may be more familiar. Speaking of Daniel Blum calls to mind his latest works which are quite praiseworthy in their field. Just two years old is his PICTORIAL HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE 1900-1950, while his 1952 publication is entitled GREAT STARS OF THE AMERICAN STAGE. The latter is a pictorial biography of more than 150 stars of the American stage, from Maude Adams to Uta Hagen. (Continued on Page 3)

## CROSS COUNTRY CIRCUIT (Cont'd from Page 1)

### Colleges & Universities

January 16, 17, 18 are the dates set aside for the Anselmian Abbey Players' production of the Gilbert and Sullivan Operetta, *PATIENCE*. The drama students at *St. Anselm's College*, Manchester, New Hampshire, are under the direction of Rev. Thomas Flaherty, O.S.B.

In our October-November issue of *The Calendar* we neglected to mention that the annual musical at *Loretto Heights College*, Denver, was *SWEETHEARTS*. Dr. Earl Bach is director of Speech & Drama at Loretto Heights.

For the Christmas program at *College of St. Francis*, Joliet, Ill., Sr. M. La Verne, O.S.F., chose the pageant, *CHRISTMAS AT GRECCIO*. Sister LaVerne tells us that students are still giving their weekly broadcasts from their own college studios. St. Francis also boasts a newly remodeled speech clinic which is now in its seventh year.

At *Annhurst College*, South Woodstock, Conn., the Dramatic Club presented its annual Christmas play Dec. 18. This year's choice was Benet's *A CHILD IS BORN*. Sister Cecile de la Providence directed the production.

In conjunction with the BBC transcription service, *Fordham University* broadcast the program, *THE BOSWELL STORY*, over their FM station, Dec. 13. The play, written by Leonard Cottrell and produced by Peter Duval Smith, is about the discovery of the Boswell papers. On Dec. 27th was broadcast a play in verse called *THE FIRE ON THE SNOW*. Author and

producer were Douglas Stewart and Tyrone Guthrie. Both shows ran an hour and a half.

Plans are well under way for the Play Festival to be held February 13 & 14 at *Rockhurst College*, Kansas City, Missouri. Further information may be obtained from Father Freeman, S.J. at Rockhurst.

### Community

Once again we have received the monthly publication of the *Dayton Blackfriars Guild*. The Friarcracker, as it is called, is now in its thirteenth year and is exemplary of the enthusiasm of its publishers. This issue carried the news that the January production of the Guild will be *HIGH GROUND* by Hastings. Janet Barkmeyer will direct.

An original musical by Rev. John P. Tracy called *AFTER DARK* is the forthcoming production of the *Queen's Players* of Austin, Minnesota. Under the direction of Rev. Chester Gallagher, the show will run four nights, January 11 through 14th.

## BOOK SECTION (Cont'd from Page 1)

Are you interested in Television? William Kaufman of NBC is the first person to attempt a compilation of TV plays. To date he has published two volumes of his *BEST TELEVISION PLAYS OF THE YEAR*. Each volume contains ten complete plays as well as articles on various aspects of Television production, written by experts in the field. Merlin Press, Inc., New York.

### EASTER PROGRAMS

We are in the process of making up a list of suggested plays for Easter programs which we will publish in a subsequent issue of *The Calendar*. If you have any titles which you would like to submit, they would be most welcome. Send them to the Service Bureau along with any pertinent comments you may have.

### IN THE NEWS

If you have not already seen the December issue of the *Cisca News* then you do not know that our President Walter Bamberger was interviewed therein regarding various aspects of student drama.

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### Play Production Work Sheet

**ON WITH THE MOTLEY:** by Stuart Ready published by Baker's Plays.

**Production:** The play is a farcical comedy for eleven women in three acts.

**Scene:** The living room in a nursing home somewhat removed from the City.

**Story:** Miss Thelma Bunting, dramatic director for the Temple Twinings Townswomen's Guild, is entrusted with the difficult task of winning the Twimley Cup. In order to provide a weekend of intensive rehearsal, she takes her cast members to an unused nursing home, which has been loaned her by her sister. The heterogeneous members of the group, (Sonia, Sybil, Leda, Edie, Claudia and Valerie,) make repeated attempts to escape. They all have dates, but upon investigation discover locked doors, dead telephone and barred windows, which suggest that the place is, or was once, a mental home. The constant barking of a dog, together with the presence of the maid, Hannah — strongly built and very determined, make all hope of escape seem futile.

The news of the arrival of Lady Twimley, wife of Sir Lionel, donor of the Twimley prize Cup, makes it necessary for cast members, as well as Director Bunting, and maid Hannah, to assume the new roles of patients and Chief of Staff. The confusion increases when Mrs. Abley, a furtive little woman, appears and insists she is to do the cooking. Because of a series of amusing incidents which follow Lady Twimley's arrival, this important guest begins to suspect the efficiency of the nursing staff. To make matters worse a certain Miss Lauderdale is announced. She is an Inspector from the Ministry of Health, and has come to secure a report for the Ministry. At this point Director Bunting is accused of a long list of crimes, and is direfully threatened by both Lady Twimley and Miss Lauderdale. Then, just in the nick of time Edie comes to the rescue with one of her ideas. She discloses the fact that Lady Twimley takes little trips to the Continent now and then — sometimes four or five times yearly. She brings back all sorts of wares, especially beautiful nylons which she trades to Miss Lauderdale for pin money. The latter who is no Ministry of Health servant, but a woman who runs a shady dress shop, is finally caught in her deception, and Lady Twimley is discovered to be using this nursing home as a storehouse for her contraband goods, which are hidden in trunks stored in the attic during the period when the nursing home was to have been unused.

She had bribed an old servant, Mrs. Abley, to open it up so that she and Miss Lauderdale could take the goods away before the return of the owner, Director Bunting's sister. Miss Bunting and her dramatic cast somewhat upset her plans. To save herself Lady Twimley is willing to make amends by presenting all concerned with several pairs of nylons. Knowing girls — you guess what happens. Miss Lauderdale can do no less than drive cast members to their respective homes in the City — and Director Bunting having signed

them up for a series of intensive rehearsals joins the cast and we hope wins the Twimley Cup.

**Evaluation:** This play, because of its interesting plot and fine opportunity for characterization, is above the average type of play now being offered for female casts.

The play given its American Premiere performance Nov. 23 at the Academy of the Holy Angels, Minneapolis, Minnesota, was well received by its audience and is something new in a play here in America. Colleges might use it to start out the year, but it is a good vehicle for high school seniors who are in search of something new in a light comedy. Practically all characters are good parts, and there are very few minor roles. The students will enjoy working in this play, and the Director will meet with few stage problems since the scene and set are easily attained.

(The copy \$.85. Royalty \$25.00)

Submitted by Sister M. Charitas, C. S. J., Academy of the Holy Angels, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

### LUTE SONG

Several inquiries have come to us concerning production rights for LUTE SONG. All rights to its production are controlled by Brandt & Brandt Dramatic Department, Inc., 101 Park Ave., New York 17, N. Y.

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"In answer to your questions in the letter addressed to Sister Patricia, I am happy to report that 'THE LITTLE DOG LAUGHED' worked out well for me because the dialogue and action are so well-planned in the writing of it. Our double cast responded to the spirit of the play and co-operated most willingly. Competition between alternate players was keen, and we saw a degree of achievement at each rehearsal. We never experienced a real lag, nor did the play grow stale. The most important people to consider — our audience — enjoyed unlimited laughter and didn't hesitate to praise us hugely — sincerely so." — MARY BEECHER, Director of Dramatics, St. Michael's Central High School, Chicago, Illinois.

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"I have been coaching plays for fifteen years, and I liked 'THE LITTLE DOG LAUGHED' the best. The stage setting and plot are unusual. It really challenged me more than any play I've coached." — MRS. GEORGIA KIRCHICK, Director, Moore High School, Moore, Okla.

"'THE LITTLE DOG LAUGHED' went over in a tremendous way. For a play of high hilarity, good plot, and clean fun, it is tops. All our plays have been very successful, but I think this has received most praise. It is unique in stage setting, extra sidewalk characters, and diversified action." — SISTER M. PATRICIA, St. Paul High School, Pocahontas, Arkansas.

"'THE LITTLE DOG LAUGHED' is a wonderful play for a teen-age cast. There is always action on the stage, which makes the play easy to direct. This play, to me, fulfills the requirements for a high school play: plenty of action, clean comedy, characterizations that are possible for teen-agers who have had no dramatic training. The plot is different from the usual one of 'prom dates,' 'boy-or-girl-finally-gets-date' etc. The cast (all juniors) literally loved 'THE LITTLE DOG LAUGHED.' The lines practically 'learned' themselves." — MRS. FRANK J. WOELL, Director, Lincoln High School, Casselton, No. Dak.

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